Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL PAGE 01 PHNOM 01019 01 OF 04 221408Z 53 **ACTION EA-14** INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 IO-14 AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 CU-04 EB-11 OPR-02 DRC-01 /185 W ----- 047544 O R 221215Z JAN 74 FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4655 INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK AMEMBASSY CANBERRA AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN F UMJBT/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 892 AMCONSUL HONG KONG AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR AMEMBASSY LONDON AMEMBASSY MANILA AMEMBASSY MOSCOW AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI AMEMBASSY PARIS USLO PEKING AMEMBASSY RANGOON JRUMJIR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON 5744 AMEMBASSY SEOUL AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE USIA WASHDC AMEMBASSY TOKYO AMCONSUL UDORN

RIP

CONFIDENTIAL

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 01019 01 OF 04 221408Z

FGUC/AMEMBASSY TAIPEI 724

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 4 PHNOM PENH 1019

JOINT EMBASSY/DAO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, MOPS, CB

SUBJ: KHMER REPORT -- JANUARY 22, 1974

1. GENERAL

THE ENEMY TRIED THIS WEEK TO OPEN UP A NEW FRONT ON PHNOM PENH'S SOUTHERN PERIMETER WHILE ITS MAJOR EFFORT OF THIS DRY SEASON HIGHPOINT, THE PENETRATION OF THE CAPITAL CITY'S NORTHWEST PERIMETER, SEEMED ON THE VERGE OF CRUMBLING. CONTINUED ROCKETING OF PHNOM PENH PROMPTED THE CLOSING OF SCHOOLS AND THE TEMPORARY DEPARTURE OF FRENCH TEACHERS AND FAMILIES OF FOREIGN EMBASSY PERSONNEL. FORMER PRIME MINISTER SON SANN'S APPEAL FOR LON NOL'S DEPARTURE CONTINUED TO HAVE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE POLITICAL SCENE, STIMULATING SYMPATHETIC NOISES FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND SOME STUDENT GROUPS, A PRO-COMMUNIST DECLARATION FROM THE LEFTIST FACULTY OF LETTERS STUDENT ASSOCIATION AN A PROMPT BUT CONTROLLED REACTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

OLE GOVERNMENT'S CLOSING OF ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES, JUSTIFIED BY THE DANGER FROM ENEMY ROCKETS, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 01019 01 OF 04 221408Z

WAS SEEN AS A MEANS OF WEAKENING STUDENT AND TEACHER PROTEST MOVEMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS OF PUBLIC ASSEMBLY WERE ALSO BEING PLANNED. AT WEEK'S END THERE WAS A PROTEST FROM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OVER THE CLOSING OF SCHOOLS, WITH INDICATIONS OF MORE OPPOSITION TO COME FROM UNIVERSITY STUDENTS. IN CANTON, SIHANOUK REITERATED GRUNK/FUNK'S REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE OR COMPROMISE WITH THE GKR, NOTED THAT THE "PEOPLE'S FORCES" WILL DO THEIR UTMOST TO

WIN THIS YEAR BUT EXPRESSED THEIR DETERMINATION TO PRESS ON TO TOTAL VICTORY NO MATTER HOW LONG THE FIGHT. INTERNAL GRUNK/FUNK PROPAGANDA MAINTAINED ITS BELLICOSE TONE, BUT WAS SOMEWHAT AMBIGUOUS ON PREDICTING THE OUTCOME OF THE DRY SEASON OFFENSIVE. ECONOMICALLY, THE RICE SITUATION IMPROVED BUT THE OVERALL SHORTAGE OF POL PRODUCTS IS GRADUALLY HAVING ITS EFFECT ON PHNOM PENH.

POLITICAL (INTERNAL)1,

2. THE FIRST FOUR DAYS OF THE REPORTING PERIML SAW A SERIES OF REACTIONS TO FORMER PRIME MINISTER SON SANN'S PEACE INITIATIVE (SEEO

ANUARY 15 KHMER REPORT), THE MOST NOTEWORTHY OF WHICH WAS A BLATANTLY PRO-COMMUNIST DECLARATION BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE FACULTY OF LETTERS STUDNT ASSOCIATION. REJECTING SON SANN'S SUGGESTION THAT LON NOL LEAVE AS A FRUTILE O MEASURE, THIS DECLARATION DEMANDED THE SWEEPING AWAY OF THE WHOLE INSTITUTIONAL ARSENAL SUPPORTED SOLELY BY MASSIVE FOREIGN AID." READ BY THE RAIDCAL YOUTH LEADER LOCH SOEUN WHO NOW HEADS BOTH THE LETTERS AND THE NATIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS, THE DECLARATION WAS REPLETE WITH MARXIST IMAGES OF DOMESTIC OPPRESSORS AND FOREIGN EXPLOITERS AND CONCLUDED THAT RADICAL STRUGGLE IS THE ONLY COURSE LEFT OPEN TO THE STUDENTS.

3. MORE MODERATE REACTIONS CAME FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WHICH APPLAUDED SON SANN'S "IMPORTANT POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN PATRIOTS OF ALL TENDENCIES" AND FROM THE SUTDENT ASSOCIATIONS OF THE MEDICAL AND BUSINESS FACULTIES, WHO IN INDICATING THEIR SUPPORT FOR SON SANN CONSTRAINED THEMSELVES TO ADVOCATING THE DEPARTURE OF "PERSONALITIES WHO ARE OBSTACLES TO A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT." MODERATE LAW FACULTY STUDENTS APPARENTLY MANAGED TO QUASH A STATEMENT PROPOSED BY THE RADICAL LEADERSHIP OF THEIR ASSOCIATION.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PHNOM 01019 01 OF 04 221408Z

4. GOVERNMENT REACTION WAS FIRM BUT CONTROLLED. IN CONTRAST TO THE INFORMATION MINISTER'S LOW-KEY REBUTTAL (SEE KHMER REPORT JAN. 15), THE RULING SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY APPROVED A RESOLUTION JANURY 13 DEMANDING THAT LON NOL STAY AND ASKING THAT SON SANN BE PUNISHED FOR TURNING A CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC MATTERS INTO A POLITICAL MEETING. THE GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, TOOK NO ACTION AGAINST HIM. LON NOL HIMSELF ISSUED A JANUARY 19 MESSAGE TO THE NATION WHICH NOTED THAT THE DECISIVE BATTLE IS AT HAND, AND, WITHOUT MENTIONING SON SANN'S DEMARCHE AND THE FACULTY OF LETTERS'

STATEMENT, MADE NOTE OF TWO RECENT "SUBVERSIVE

NNN CONFIDENTIAL PAGE 01 PHNOM 01019 02 OF 04 221310Z 46 **ACTION EA-14** INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 IO-14 AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 CU-04 EB-11 OPR-02 DRC-01 /185 W ----- 047003 O R 221215Z JAN 74 FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4656 INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK AMEMBASSY CANBERRA AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN AMEMBASSY JAKARTA AMCONSUL HONG KONG AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR AMEMBASSY LONDON AMEMBASSY MANILA AMEMBASSY MOSCOW AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI AMEMBASSY PARIS USLO PEKING AMEMBASSY RANGOON AMEMBASSY SAIGON AMEMBASSY SEOUL AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE USIA WASHDC AMEMBASSY TOKYO AMCONSUL UDORN AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON USMISSION USUN AMCONSUL CAN THO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA AMEMBASSY TAIPEI CINCPAC CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 01019 02 OF 04 221310Z

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 4 PHNOM PENH 1019

ACTS" IN CONCERT WITH ENEMY MILITARY ACTION AGAINST THE CAPITAL. THE EDUCATION MINISTRY ON JANUARY 19 TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED CLASSIS IN ALL SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE CAPITAL UNTIL THE THREAT FROM ENEMY SHELLING HAS DIMINISHED. ALTHOUGH A LOGICAL STEP, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE EARLIER FRENCH DECISION TO CLOSE ITS LYCEE, THIS MEASURE WAS OBVIOUSLY AIMED AT HAMPERING THE ACTIVISM OF STUDENTS AS WELL AS TEACHERS (SEE NEXT PARA) AND DREW A PROTEST FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF LYCEE STUDENTS. AT THE END OF THE REPORTING PERIOD, THE CABINET APPROVED A DECREE PROHIBITING PUBLIC MEETINGS AND SENT IT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR SIGNATURE.

5. DISDAINFULLY ACCEPTING THE 3,000 RIEL INCREAST IN THE COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE PROFERRED BY THE GOVERNMENT, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DAYS THEY WOULD WORK MONTHLY FROM KNY659 13. THE SUBSEQUENT CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS, HOWEVER, STRIPPED THIS DEFIANT GESTURE OF SIGNIFICANCE.

6. IN ONE MARATHON SESSION LASTING FROM THE MORNING OF JANUARY 20 TO FIVE A.M. JANUARY 21, THE SOCIO-REPUBLICAN CONGRESS ELECTED A NEW, BASICALLY MODERATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. MODERATES, LED BY ASSEMBLY VICE-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 01019 02 OF 04 221310Z

PRESIDENT PAN SOTHI AND OUTGOING SECRETARY-GENERAL HANG THUN HAK, DEFEATED CHALLENGES FROM LON NONIST INFORMATION UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE THONG LIM HUONG, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR LAAU BOUNPA AND MINISTER OF LABOR, COMMUNITY DE-

VELOPMENT AND REFUGEES THACH TOAN. ONLY ONE LON NONIST UNG SIKHUN, THE HEAD OF THE PARTY'S CAPITAL ORGANIZATION, MADE IT TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. LON NOL HIMSELF RULED HIS YOUNGER BROTHER INEPXGIBLE TO RUN BECAUSE HE IS ASSIGNED ABROAD AND STILL IN THE MILITARY. COMMENT: THIS DEFEAT WILL HANDICAP BUT NOT PREVENT FURTHER EFFORTS BY LON NON TO STAGE A COMEBACK.

7. THE SENATE AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY VOTED APPROVAL OF THE LAW NCREASING COST-OF-LIVING BENEFITS TO CIVIL AND MILITARY PERSONNEL.

8. CONSCRIPTION/RECRUITMENT EFFORTS REMAINED AT A SLOW PACE. THE WEEKLY TOTAL FOR PHNOM PENH WAS 332 NEW ACCESSIONS BRINGING THE CUMULATIVE TOTAL FOR THE CITY TO 13,224 EXCLUSIVE OF RALLIERS. THE COUNTRYSIDE TOTAL SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CONSCRIPTION/RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN BR OCTOBER 10 NOW STANDS AT 17,047, TO WHICH FANK ADDS 777 RALLIERS. POLITICAL AGIZRTION ON THE PART OF STCDENTS AND TEACHERS LED THE JOINT STAFF FOR CONSCRIPTION TO POSTPONE PLANS TO PICK UP DRAFT DODGERS, ALTHOUGH A ROUND-UP OF DESERTERS IS BEING CONTEMPLATED.

POLITICAL (EXTERNAL)

9. IN THE WAKE OF THE CONTINUING ROCKET ATTACKS AGAINST PHNOM PENH, VARIOUS FOREIGN MISSIONS HAVE DECIDED TO MOVE OUT SOME OF THEIR NATIONALS. THE AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH EMBASSIES AS WELL AS THE GERMAN INTERESTS SECTION OF THE FRENCH EMBASSY ARE EVACUATING ALL DEPENDENTS OF THEIR OFFICIAL STAFF AND ADVISING PRIVATE CITIZENS TO LEAVE AS WELL. THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IS SENDING OUT ALL OF ITS OFFICIAL DEPENDENTS. FOLLOWING THE ROCKETING OF THE FRENCH LYCEE IN PNNOM PENH, THE FRENCH EMBASSY DECLARED A TWO-MONTH SCHOOL VACATION AFTER WHICH HOPEFULLY THE LYCEE WILL REOPEN. THE FRENCH TEACHERS AND OFFICIAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PHNOM 01019 02 OF 04 221310Z

FRENCH DEPENDENTS ARE LEAVING AND THE EMBASSY HAS ADVISED PRIVATE CITIZENS TO EVACUATE THEIR FAMILIES. THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY HAS ALSO ADVISED ALL ITS NATIONALS TO CONSIDER EVACUATING PHNOM PENH.

10. IN THE ABSENCE OF A CLEAR SIGNAL AS YET FROM MOSCOW, EAST GERMANY APPEARS IN SOMEWHAT OF A QUANDARY AS TO THE

NNN CONFIDENTIAL PAGE 01 PHNOM 01019 03 OF 04 221347Z **ACTION EA-14** INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 IO-14 AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 CU-04 EB-11 OPR-02 DRC-01 /185 W ----- 047432 O P 221215Z JAN 74 FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4657 INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK AMEMBASSY CANBERRA AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN AMEMBASSY JAKARTA AMCONSUL HONG KONG AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR AMEMBASSY LONDON AMEMBASSY MANILA AMEMBASSY MOSCOW AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI AMEMBASSY PARIS USLO PEKING AMEMBASSY RANGOON AMEMBASSY SAIGON AMEMBASSY SEOUL AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE USIA WASHDC AMEMBASSY TOKYO AMCONSUL UDORN AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON USMISSION USUN AMCONSUL CAN THO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA AMEMBASSY TAIPEI CINCPAC CINCPACFLT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 01019 03 OF 04 221347Z

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7TH PSYOPS

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III MAF

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 3 OF 4 PHNOM PENH 1019

HANDLING OF THE GKR/GRUNK SITUATION. THE GKR CULTURAL ATTACHE REMAINS IN PLACE AND TWO DEFECTORS FROM THE GKR EMBASSY TO GRUNK (SEE LAST WEEK'S KHMER REPORT) HAVE BEEN HANDLED VERY GINGERLY BY GDR PROPAGANDA MEDIA. EVI-

DENTLY THE EAST GERMANS ARE ENGAGING IN A HOLDING ACTION UNTIL MOSCOW MAKES UP ITS MIND.

GRUNK/FUNK

1. SIHANOUK IN A JANUARY 21 INTERVIEW WITH AFP RE-AFFIRMED GRUNK/FUNK REFUSAL TO COMPROMISE IN ANY WAY WITH THE GKR OR A PHNOM PENH "THIRD FORCE" AND DECLARED THAT THE FORCES ATTACKING PHNOM PENH HAD TOLD HIM THEY "WOULD DO THEIR UTMOST TO END IT THIS YEAR". EVEN IF THIS DOES NOT OCCUR, "WE ARE PREPARING OUR PEOPLE FOR A LONG WAR", THE PRINCE ADDED. HE SAID THAT THE "REDZHMER" AND THEIR PROGRAM CAN BRING "GRANDEUR TO CAMBODIA" AND DEFENDED THEIR ROCKETING OF PHNOM PENH BY CITING THE VARIOUS "WARN-INGS" TO FOREIGN AND NATIVE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY, RE-ACTING DEFENSIVELY TO CRITICISM OF ROCKETING, HE SAID THAT "WE ARE BLAMED BECAUSE WE ARE SMALL" WHILE "NO ONE SAYS ANYTHING TO THE UNITED STATES". DURING THE WEEK, SIHANOUK ONCE AGAIN APPEALED TO SENATORS MANSFIELD AND FULBRIGHT (SEE KHMER REPORT UIPF DECEMBER 18, 1973) TO PREVENT A RE-INTRODUCTION OF U.S. AIR IN CAMBODIA, WHICH HE CLAIMED CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 01019 03 OF 04 221347Z

WOULD SOON BE REQUESTED BY THE GKR.

12. FUNK RADIO CONTINUED ITS THEME OF SEVERAL WEEKS DURATION THAT KHMER LIVING PHNOM PENH SHOULD MOVE OVER TO

THE "LIBERATED ZONE" FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY. BROADCASTS ON JANUARY 17 AND 21 PROMISED THAT "ONLY THE TRAITOROUS CLIQUEUH WILL BE PUNISHED, BUT APPEALED TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND "BROTHERS" TO STOP SUPPORTING THE GKR AND JOIN

EFFORTS WITH THE CPNLAF. THE RADIO ALSO GLOATED OVER AN EXODUS FROM PHNOM PENH, CLAIMING THAT ON JANUARY 2, 3 AND 5 POCHENTONG WAS "PACKED" WITH FOREIGNERS, MOSTLY "WESTERN EXPERTS WHO DECIDED TOTERMINATE THEIR MISSIONS AHEAD OF TIME". THIS DEPARTURE FURTHER SHOWS THE ISOLATION OF THE GKR WHICH WILL BE ANNIHILATED BY FUNK "DURING THIS DRY SEASON" ACCORDING TO THE RADIO. FUNK ALLEGED ON JANUARY 21 THAT A "PANIC STRIKEN" LON NOL, HEARING OF THE MILITARY SITUATION, WANTED TO FLEE AND MOVE THE GOVERNMENT FROM PHNOM PENH.

13. DESPITE ITS DESCRIPTION OF THE END AWAITING PHNOM PENH, GRUNK RADIO GAVE SOME INDICATION OF HEDGING ITS BETS ON AN EARLY VICTORY. THE RADIO DEVOTED SEVERAL LONG BROADCASTS TO SUMMING UP DRY SEASON "ACHIEVEMENTS" AND VOICING FUNK DETERMINATION TO "ACHIEVE THE REVOLUTIONARY DRY SEASON MISSION OF 1974" WITHOUT, HOWEVER, DEFINING THE MISSION. A SECOND BROADCAST ON HOU YOUN'S "TOUR" ALONG THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG OPPOSITE PHNOM PENH (SEE KHMER REPORT OF JANUARY 8) REFERRED TO A "RESOLUTION" ALLEGEDLY ADOPTED BY 10.000 RESIDENTS OF THE AREA WHICH SPOKE OF THE DRY SEASON CAMPAIGN "CRATING CONDITIONS" FOR THE "TOTAL AND DEFINITIVE LIBERATION OF PHNOM PENH AND CAMBODIA." CONCERNING THE SEE-SAW STATUS OF ROUTE 4, THE ENEMY RE-TREATED SOMEWHAT FROM PREVIOUS BOASTS OF PERMANENT CONTROL AND SAID LESS STRIDENTLY THAT THE GKR "CAN NO LONGER USE THIS STRATEGIC ROAD".

GRUNK/FUNK (EXTERNAL)

14. THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE DECIDED AS OF JANUARY 18 TO CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PHNOM 01019 03 OF 04 221347Z

"PUT AN END TO" DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH GRUNK WHICH HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED BY THE ALLENDE REGIME IN JANUARY 1973. THE ANNOUNCED REASON FOR THE BREAK WAS THE GRUNK ATTEMPT TO IMPORT GUERRILLA TRAINING LITERATURE INTO THE COUNTRY UNDER THE COVER OF HOUSEHOLD GOODS.

ECONOMIC

15. THE RICE SITUATION IN PHNOM PENH CONTINUES TO

NNN CONFIDENTIAL PAGE 01 PHNOM 01019 04 OF 04 221353Z 53 **ACTION EA-14** INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 IO-14 AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 CU-04 EB-11 OPR-02 DRC-01 /185 W ----- 047480 O R 221215Z JAN 74 FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4658 INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK AMEMBASSY CANBERRA AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN AMEMBASSY JAKARTA AMCONSUL HONG KONG AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR AMEMBASSY LONDON AMEMBASSY MANILA AMEMBASSY MOSCOW AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI AMEMBASSY PARIS USLO PEKING AMEMBASSY RANGOON AMEMBASSY SAIGON RUMJSLXAMEMBASSYWEOUL 799 AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE USIA WASHDC AMEMBASSY TOKYO AMCONSUL UDORN AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON USMISSION USUN AMCONSUL CANNYHO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA AMEMBASSY TAIPEI CINCYBC CINCPACFLT CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 01019 04 OF 04 221353Z

CINCUSARPAC

DIA WASHDC

CGFMFPAC

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COMNAVINTCOM

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7/13 AF

7TH PSYOPS

COMUSSAG

III MAF

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 4 OF 4 PHNOM PENH 1019

IMPROVE THANKS TO A STEADY INFLUX OF PL-480 RICE TRANSSHPPED IN SAIGON. ON JANUARY 20 RICE STOCKS TOTALED 22,481 MT REPRESENTING 34.5 DAYS' SUPPLY. THE IMPROVEMENT IS ILLUSTRATED FURTHER BY THE FACT THAT RICE DISTRIBUTION THROUGHGOVERNMENT CHANNELS IS ON THE DECLINE AS MORE RICE BECOMES AVAILABLE ON THE OPEN MARKET.

16. THE THAI GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THERE WILL BE AN EXPORT EMBARGO ON SHIPMENTS OF POL. THE FUELS BEING SUPPLIED FROM THAILAND DO NOT REPRESENT A LARGE QUANTITY BUT ARE CURRENTLY THE ONLY SOURCE OF SUPPLY FOR THE BATTAMBANG AREA. ALSO, SMALL AMOUNTS ARE PROVIDED KOMPONG SOM AND PHNOM PENH. THE POL COMPANIES IN THAILAND ARE REQUESTING EXPORT PERMITS FROM THE THAI MINISTRY.

MILITARY

17. THE FANK 1ST DIVISION MADE ENCOURAGING AND MUCH NEEDED PROGRESS AGAINST THE ENEMY SALIENT ON THE NORTHEST PERIMTER OF PHNOM PENH, KILLING SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF ENEMY TROOPS AND CAPTURING PRISONERS, ARMS AND USEFUL DOCUMENTS. AS A RESULT THE IMMEDIATE THREAT FROM THIS SECTOR HAS BEEN REDUCED CONSIDERABLY. TO THE SOUTHWEST, HOWEVER, THE ENEMY REDUCED THE CAPITAL'S PERIMETER WITH LIGHT ATTACKS WHICH MAY PRESAGE A SECOND MAJOR EFFORT. THE FRONT LINE DEFENSIVE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 01019 04 OF 04 221353Z

UNITS OF THE 3RD DIVISION WERE INFILTRATED BY SMALL NUMBERS OF ENEMY FORCES AND RELINQUISHED 2-3KMS OF DEFENSIVE PERIMQIETER UNDER EXTEMELY LIGHT PRESSURE. THE 3RD DIVISION WAS REINFORCED QUICKLY BY OTHER UNITS, BUT AT WEEK'S END, THE SITUATION

IN THE SOUTH WAS STILL NOT CLEAR.

18. 122MM ROCKETS CONTINUED TO FALL IN PHNOM PENH THROUGHOUT THE WEEK ON AMVALMOST DAILY BAIS AND CAUSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE FOREIGN COMMUNITY (SS PARA 9). HOWEVER, ACTUAL CAPABILITIES AND DAMAGE HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY LIGHT.

19. ENEMY ACTIVITY DECREASED ON THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG OPPOSITE PHNOM PENH BUT PICKED UP CONSIDERABLY IN THE SOUTHEAST SECTOR IN THE TAKHMAU-PREK PRA-PREK EV AREAS. KHMER NAVAL INFANTRY UNITS ACQUITTED THEMSELVES WELL AGAINST INCREASGNNG ENEMY ATTACKS APPROXIMATELY 20 KM SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH ON THE MEKONG RIVER, IN THWARTING ENEMY EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH A FOOTHOLD ON THE WEST BANK OF THE RIVER.

20. THE LAST PART OF THE CONVOY WHICH LEFT FROM KOMPONG SOM ON ROUTE 4 ON JANUARY 10 FINALLY WURIVED IN PHNOM PENH ON JANUARY 21. IT HAD BEEN HELD UP WEST OF KOMPONG SPEU FOR SOME TIME BECAUSE OF ENEMY INTERDICTION. FANK NOW HAS REPAIRED ROZE 4 FROM KG SEILA T PHNOM PENHN BUT THE ROAD REMAINS INTERDICTED WEST OF KAONG. ENDERS

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OPERATIONS, SCHOOLS, EVACUATIONS, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL, PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS

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